CLAIMS

1. A scanner comprising:

memory storing a frame of image data belonging to a study and report data belonging to said study;

a parallel port;

a serial port;

means for joining an identifier with said frame of image data, said identifier identifying said study;

means for sending said frame of image data and said identifier in a first format out said parallel port;

means for joining said identifier with said report data; and

means for sending said report data and said identifier in a second format out said serial port.

2. The scanner as recited in claim 1, wherein said first format conforms to DICOM standards.

3. The scanner as recited in claim 2, wherein identifier comprises a DICOM study instance unique identifier.

4. The scanner as recited in claim 1, wherein said second format is ASCII format.

5. The scanner as recited in claim 1, wherein said parallel port comprises an Ethernet connection.

6. The scanner as recited in claim 1, wherein said serial port comprises an RS232 interface.

7. The scanner as recited in claim 1, further comprising an image acquisition subsystem for acquiring

said frame of image data, wherein said image acquisition subsystem comprises an array of ultrasound transducer elements.

8. The scanner as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

a display monitor;

means for displaying said frame of image data on said display monitor;

means for measuring a feature in said displayed frame to acquire measurement data; and

a user interface screen for displaying said measurement data on said display monitor,

wherein said report data in said memory comprises said measurement data.

9. The scanner as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

a display monitor;

a user interface screen displayed on said display monitor and comprising fields for entering patient information; and

means for constructing said study identifier based at least in part on patient information entered on said user interface screen.

10. A scanner comprising:

memory storing a frame of image data belonging to a study and report data belonging to said study;

a parallel port;

a serial port; and

a computer programmed to perform the following steps:

joining an identifier with said frame of image data, said identifier identifying said study;

sending said frame of image data and said identifier in a first format out said parallel port;

joining said identifier with said report data; and

sending said report data and said identifier in a second format out said serial port.

11. The scanner as recited in claim 10, wherein said first format conforms to DICOM standards and said second format is ASCII format.

12. The scanner as recited in claim 10, wherein said parallel port comprises an Ethernet connection and said serial port comprises an RS232 interface.

13. The scanner as recited in claim 10, further comprising an array of ultrasound transducer elements.

14. The scanner as recited in claim 10, further comprising a user interface for entering report data and initiating transfer of said report data to said serial port, wherein said computer is further programmed to join said study identifier with said report data in response to initiation of transfer of said report data to said serial port.

15. A method for transmitting linked images and reports from a computerized system, comprising the steps of:

joining an identifier with a frame of image data, said identifier identifying a study;

sending said frame of image data and said identifier in a first format out a parallel port of said computerized system;

joining said identifier with report data; and

sending said report data and said identifier in a second format out a serial port of said computerized system.

16. The method as recited in claim 15, wherein said first format conforms to DICOM standards.

17. The method as recited in claim 16, wherein identifier comprises a DICOM study instance unique identifier.

18. The method as recited in claim 15, wherein said second format comprises ASCII format.

19. The method as recited in claim 15, wherein said parallel port comprises an Ethernet connection.

20. The method as recited in claim 15, wherein serial port comprises an RS232 interface.

21. A view station comprising:

a display monitor;

a user interface;

a parallel port;

a serial port;

memory; and

a computer programmed to perform the following steps:

storing frames of image data received in a first format via said parallel port in said memory;

detecting report data having no study identifier received in a second format via said serial port;

searching said frames of image data for a frame having attributes joined with said image data which closely match attributes joined with said report data;

generating a message on said display monitor requesting confirmation that said report data should be linked to said frame having said closely matching attributes; and

attaching said study identifier to said report data in response to receipt of a user input indicating confirmation via said operator interface.

22. A method for linking images and report data in a computerized system, comprising the steps of:

storing frames of image data in memory;

receiving report data via a serial port;

detecting report data having no study identifier;

searching said frames of image data for a frame having attributes joined with said image data which closely match attributes joined with said report data;

displaying a message requesting confirmation that said report data should be linked to said frame having said closely matching attributes; and

~~attaching said study identifier to said report~~ data in response to receipt of confirmation.